

**Iowa Council on Homelessness Recommendations  
For the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Shelter Assistance Fund (SAF)  
March 16, 2012**

**Background:**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is requiring that grantees of the newly revised federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program consult with Continuums of Care to develop ESG program plans. The grantee for the State of Iowa is the Iowa Finance Authority; the decision-making body for the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care is the Iowa Council on Homelessness. These recommendations are proposed by the Executive Committee of the Council; if approved, they will compose the Council's formal recommendations to the Iowa Finance Authority for the future of ESG.

The Executive Committee of the Iowa Council on Homelessness met for two in-person meetings to discuss these recommendations, on February 24, 2012 and on March 9, 2012.

Specific ESG allocations of funds considered for these recommendations include federal FY 2011 "Phase II" funds in the amount of \$858,607 and FY 2012 uncommitted funds in the approximate amount of \$1.2 million. Additional consideration is also given to the state Shelter Assistance Fund (SAF), funds that have traditionally been combined with ESG. Plans may carry forward to future ESG and SAF allocations.

**Recommendations:**

**Issue #1, Competition Structure:**

- For the federal FY 2011 Phase II funds, hold a limited competition for funds, with up to five local/regional communities selected for funding, with option for further subcontracting by lead agency/applicant.
- For the federal FY 2011 Phase II funds, implement an 18 month grant timeline, from July 2012 through December 2013.
- ESG funds will support services in the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care.
- Hold separate competitions for ESG and SAF, at least until the 2015 calendar year.

**Issue #2, Project Prioritization:**

- Prioritize Rapid Rehousing and Homelessness Prevention; move toward spending 50% of ESG funds annually on Rapid Rehousing and Homelessness Prevention, and 50% on Shelter and Street Outreach (aside from reserved amount for Administration and Data Collection/Reporting).
- Emphasize alignment with the goals of *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. These include: End chronic homelessness by 2015; Prevent and end veterans' homelessness by 2015; Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020; and reduce all other types of homelessness.

Issue #3, Application Limits:

- Remove the \$50,000 limit on individual project grant applications for both SAF and ESG, and limit agencies to one application per competition, with the ability to apply for more than one service, type of assistance, or location.

Issue #4, Performance Measures:

- Link performance measures to HEARTH goals.
- Program grants will be scored on the basis of the services provided.

Issue #5, SAF Rules:

- Implement a two year transition period where SAF rules remain inclusive to agencies that no longer qualify for ESG. Beginning with the 2015 calendar year competition, align SAF rules with ESG.

Issue #6, HMIS Participation:

- Reinforce HMIS participation by scoring community participation in future competitions.

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> Day of March, 2012

Respectfully Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved as to form:

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_